

Due to the overwhelming demand for access to the Volunteer Pilot Test from principals, teachers, parents, and the public, Smarter Balanced has decided to release a more complete and more broadly available “Practice Test” in lieu of the Volunteer Pilot Test.

- The change from a Volunteer Pilot to Practice Test does not impact current testing in support of the Scientific Pilot; all schools signed up for the Scientific Pilot will continue to test as scheduled.
- The Practice Test will allow all students (and other stakeholders) to experience items drawn directly from the Scientific Pilot.
- The Practice Test will include performance tasks, and will be constructed to follow a test blueprint similar to the blueprint intended for the operational test.
- Online access to the Practice Test will not require a unique username and password, meaning schools and districts can use the Practice Test for professional development activities and for discussions with parents, policymakers, and other interested stakeholders.

The Smarter Balanced Practice Test provides teachers, schools, parents, and others significant insight into the Smarter Balanced assessments. The Practice Test will:

- Be available for grades 3–8 and 11 in both English language arts/literacy and mathematics;
- Be constructed to follow a test blueprint similar to the blueprint intended for the operational test, making the Practice Test experience an abbreviated but very similar experience to the assessment in 2014-15;
- Afford teachers, administrators, and parents access to items planned and designed for the Smarter Balanced assessment;
- Allow students to access the tests over the summer, with the Practice Test available right up to rollout of the operational assessment;
- Use the full array of item types including performance tasks; and
- Make available versions that demonstrate several accommodations
 - Text-to-speech;
 - Item-level pop-up Spanish glossaries for construct irrelevant terms (math tests only);
 - Braille; and
 - American Sign Language (ASL).
- Schools will have access to online instructions and FAQs.

Note: Accommodated forms will be released in phases across the listed grade/content combinations.

- Phase 1, May 29: Accommodations (with the exception of ASL) for grades 3, 7, and 11 math; and grades 4, 7, and 11 ELA.
- Phase 2 (TBD): Accommodations (with the exception of ASL) for grades 4, 5, 6, and 8 math; and grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 ELA.
- Phase 3 (TBD): ASL accommodation in all grades and content areas.